

Dear Conor,

In response to your query re RTE.ie, please find our response below:

"RTE.ie is a public service operated by RTE in pursuit of its public service object to maintain a website in connection with RTE's other public service objects as set out in section 114 (1) of the Broadcasting Act 2009. RTE is required to supplement its licence fee funding by earnings from commercial activities since licence fee funding has never been intended to fully fund the cost of RTE's public services. In 2011 licence fee funding was €155 million less than the cost of providing RTE's public services (RTE Financial Statements page 72). In this context it is necessary for RTE to prioritise the attribution of licence fee funding to its public services on the basis set out pages 68 and 69 of the Financial Statements.) As a result there was insufficient public funding available to attribute to online services which in consequence had to be funded from revenue generated by those services and contributions from other commercial activities.

RTE makes television and radio programmes and maintains a news gathering infrastructure primarily for the purposes of providing programming on its television and radio services. In pursuit of its public service object to operate a website in connection with these services this content is made available, free of charge via RTE.ie. RTE considers that to attempt, on some notional basis, to separate the cost of broadcast programmes between its public service broadcast services and its public service website would seriously understate the true cost of providing the broadcast services. Any costs incurred in generating content specifically for websites, repurposing content for websites and maintaining the online infrastructure are charged to the online services. RTE will continue to provide a public service website in connection with its public service television and radio services. As with other RTE public service activities it will be funded, to the extent that sufficient licence fee funding is not available, from contributions generated by RTE's commercial activities."

Yours Sincerely,

Yvonne Owens

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